

THE POPLARS.

The poplars, generically known as *Populus*, are large fast-growing trees which are represented in Canada by several species, commonly occurring. The balsam and the aspen poplar are usually the most common, and are found in nearly all parts of the Dominion, the aspen especially springing up after fires. Besides their quick growth, a reason for their rapid spread is the nature of the seed envelope, which is of light cottony texture, and by which the seeds are carried for long distances on the wind. This habit has made these trees objectionable for street purposes, as when the seeds are falling the roads are covered with the white cotton. The habit of spreading by suckers, which is specially noticeable in the balsam poplar, also causes them to be looked on with disfavour. The poplars are subject to insect attack, and the wood is soft and easily broken, so that they have but few advantages to commend them for ornamental purposes, the chief one being their fast growth.

The poplars are found in temperate or northern regions, but range as far south as Northern Mexico and Lower California. There are nine species in North America, but their main habitat is toward the north. The poplar is the oldest type of dicotyledonous plants yet identified, being common in North America in the cretaceous period.

Perhaps the best known species generally in Canada is the Aspen Poplar (*Populus tremuloides*), known in the west as the white poplar. It springs up everywhere, especially after fires, and with its white trunk and light green shimmering foliage forms a beautiful contrast to the dark coniferous trees amongst which it grows. The trembling of the leaves is one of the most noticeable characteristics of this tree, and has given it its specific name. The peculiar movement of the leaves is occasioned by the fact that the petioles or leaf stems are flattened laterally, and as a result the slightest motion of the air causes them to tremble violently. As this is more or less characteristic of the poplars it may have